



Educational Approaches to linking health and sustainability in schools – a European Perspective

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Content

- Linking health and sustainability
- The Shape Up project
- Potentials and barriers in school-community collaboration
- Key Challenges



Linking health and sustainability

- attracts researchers and professionals capable of interdisciplinary thinking and acting
- is high on the political agenda, but not a well established or researched link – we need a better understanding of the link



Understandings of links

- Sustainable Development (UNESCO)- it's about linking social, economical and environmental development
- Addressing Health and Equity through schools (Statement) - focus on determinants of health and reducing disparities by empowering schools



The Shape Up project

- European project in schools in 26 cities in 25 EU member states
- Interinstitutional, school-community collaboration
- Students and teachers from pre-school, primary and secondary schools
- Focusing on determinants of childhood obesity on different levels (school; local community; city)

Shape Up aim and approach

Aims

To develop children's capacity to critically explore and improve health-related conditions, practices and choices at family, school and community level

Approach

- Teaching and learning processes, e.g. action-orientation, participation
- Health and school policy, e.g. schools' climate'
- School's external relations, e.g. school-community collaboration

Aim of case study

Aim of study

- Knowledge about the Shape Up processes
- Insight into how barriers and possibilities influence processes

Focus today

- School community collaboration two case studies:
Vienna in Austria
and Monza in Italy



Vienna case school

Pupils attempt to:

- change the school cafeteria menu towards healthy food
- influence their own and other pupils eating and physical activity habits
- research and communicate health issues in school and city



Potentials in school-community collaboration - Vienna

- The school gains additional resources through the collaboration (knowledge, skills, contacts etc.).
- Strengthens pedagogical professional development in schools and in the collaborating agency.



Barriers in school-community collaboration – Vienna

- Working with (project-oriented) Shape Up processes within the (subject-oriented) school curriculum.
- Working with within a ‘one teacher one lesson’ structure - pressure on teacher time resources - to keep teachers committed



Monza case school

Pupils worked with

- researching and communicating health issues at school and home through a health survey
- A whole day outing in Park Monza with health related activities
- Biking for recreation and as transport




Potentials in school-community collaboration - Monza

- Collaboration with external agents - school gained economical and expert support for activities - might be a base for future collaboration
- The activities in the city 'opened up the city' for pupils, e.g. biking in the city, using the parks



Barriers in school-community collaboration - Monza

- Collaboration btw. external agents and teachers – pupils didn't feel involved
- External agents focus on dissemination - to ensure positive image of the project in the city



To overcome barriers – across the two case studies

- external and school partners need both to fulfill own aims and work towards shared aims – mutuality is crucial for sustainability
- projects are complex and time consuming
- teacher time, team based organization
and project management skills in schools
are crucial for sustainability

Sustainability - social, economical and environmental development

- Social development – developing trust, mutuality, knowledge and understanding of other agendas
- Economical development - school's gained additional resources, but project was also a strain on school resources
- Environmental development – Vienna worked with school cafeteria, Monza with a better use of the city's possibilities



Implementation challenges

- When schools collaborate with resourceful external agents pupils involvement in decisionmaking is sometimes forgotten.
- Collaboration focus on technical and economical aspects - planning activities for pupils – not with them.